

THE SOUTH INDIAN BLACKSMITH AND GOLDSMITH
THE VIŚVAKARMAS' VIEW ON IRON AND GOLD

1. *Introduction*

Artisan castes all over India claim a higher status than they have been assigned by other castes in local caste systems¹. In South India, five specialized crafts are grouped into a single caste called *panchala* or *viśvakarma*, comprising blacksmiths, carpenters², coppersmiths, sculptors², and goldsmiths. In Karnataka, they say they are Brahmans of a special and most superior kind. In support of this claim, they say they are descended from Viśvakarman³, the Parabrahma with five faces: Sadyajata, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpurusa, Sadāśiva, and Īšana, from whom five Brahmans emerged: Manu, the archetypical blacksmith (and a manifestation of Śiva), Maya, the first carpenter (Vishṇu), Tvashtri, the first coppersmith (Brahmā), Śilpi, the first sculptor (Indra), and

1. This paper is based on data collected during fieldwork in the South Indian State of Karnataka between January 1979 and December 1983. It forms part of a larger corpus of data which has been used for the authors' Ph.D. thesis (1988). Thanks are due to Mr Siddappa, Mr S.H. Upadhya and Mr H.E. Sridhar, who helped me in collecting and understanding the data.

2. The carpenters' and sculptor's views on their principal raw materials and their implications for their positions in the world has been discussed elsewhere (Brouwer, 1985).

3. There are two significantly different interpretations of Viśvakarman. In the Viśvakarma artisans' view, he is Parabrahma, the originator of the Universe. This view should not be confused with the Brahman's view, in which Viśvakarman is the celestial architect of the deities. «The latter interpretation», the Viśvakarmas argue, «degrades Viśvakarman to a mere servant of the gods».

Viśvajña, the first goldsmith (Bhaskar)⁴. Under the collective title of Panchala or Viśvakarma, there are different sub-castes (*jatis*), whose members are engaged in one of the five crafts mentioned above. (*vide*: Brouwer, 1988). Their unity is based on sharing the same ideal, namely, that they are Brahmans. This Brahmanical ideal is given form in the unitary image of the archetypal and independent Viśvakarman, the All-Maker. He is also an image of completeness: the five archetypal craftsmen are together one being, who is the creator of the universe. The participants also express this completeness in other terms: «Viśvakarman is Gayatri and Gayatri is Viśvakarman». The ideal of completeness, which this image expresses, is worked out at various levels, for instance on the individual, the crafts, and sub-caste levels.

However, things are different in reality. There is an obvious discrepancy between their claimed and conceded status. But there is also a difference in rank between the five craftsmen. On the local level, it has been observed that the goldsmith ranks higher than the blacksmith, although both belong to the same Viśvakarma caste.

In the empirical reality, the smiths are dependent on raw materials, as well as on patronage. This is true for both the blacksmith and goldsmith, but is in opposition to their ideal. Thus, the question arises how the participants themselves perceive their reality. To discover the participants' view of their reality, three sources of data are at our disposal: (i) empirical, (ii) ritual, and (iii) mythological. We can see what the smiths actually do, how they obtain their principal raw materials, how they deliver their finished products to their patrons and what they say that they do. Either stage of production may be accompanied by a ritual, whose significance can be discovered through interviewing the participants. Finally, we can turn to the smiths' myths and analyse their contents in order to ascertain their views on dependency.

Because it is currently fashionable to describe in depth on

4. All kinds of coloured and black/white pictures, representing the ideal Visvakarman with the five archetypal craftsmen, Gayatri, and many others, are available. In addition, there are a large variety of printed handbills, which 'explain', schematically, the «picturized» ideal (See also: Brouwer, 1978 and 1988).

how one has gone about the analyses, particularly when it concerns the application of Levi-Strauss' technique, I do not want to elaborate on the method here. In this paper, I have made use of a kind of structuralism and followed, largely, the «toolbox» approach as presented by O'Flaherty (1980:3-14). I have applied it to myths, as well as to empirical and ritual situations. The empirical and mythological findings have then been compared with each other, and finally all findings — the perception of reality — are compared with the participants' ideal.

2. *The blacksmith*

In this section, I shall first describe what the blacksmith does — the (inter-)actions which one can observe 'in the field'. This is followed by a descriptive analysis of the blacksmith's perceptions. The blacksmith goes to the forest alone to collect iron-ore. He takes it to the smelting-house in the village where, after smelting the ore, the new iron «demands» a sacrifice⁵. Thereafter, the iron is ready to be forged in the smith's forging-house. In this workshop, the bellows are separated from the furnace by a wall, which is marked as a manifestation of the goddess Kālī. The blacksmiths say that this whole unit — bellows, wall, furnace with or without fire — is a manifestation of Kālī. On the other side of the furnace, there is either a stone (where the blacksmith stands during the worship of the weapons (*ayudhapuja*), or the anvil (on which he sacrifices during the same ritual). The anvil is considered to be a manifestation of Śiva. It is in his workshop that he forges and finishes his products, which he delivers to his patron without any ceremony. For the majority of his products, which he makes for the peasant, his remuneration is paid in kind⁶.

The blacksmith is thus self-supporting in obtaining his princi-

5. Today, iron-mining is no longer carried out by the blacksmiths. But the Visvakarma blacksmiths from various towns in Karnataka (Channapatna, K. Gollerahalli, Halgur, Hosahatti, Magadi, Madhugiri) can remember (parts of) the process of mining, smelting and refining in which their ancestors were engaged.

6. In northern Karnataka, this type of payment is called *aya* and in southern Karnataka *hadade*. One may speak about the *aya* or *hadade* organization of the landlords.

pal raw material — iron —, but he is tied in with the local organization of the landlords. He performs only one ritual: the animal sacrifice for Kālī. The delivery of his products are without ceremony, but the owners of these (iron) products perform the *ayudhapuja* on their own premises before they use the new product for the first time and repeat it once a year. (The delivery *puja* and the *ayudhapuja* are similar in action and content). It may be concluded, that the blacksmith, self-supporting in obtaining iron, establishes a relationship with the goddess through a violent activity, while he has a close link with the lords of the soil.

Let us now turn to the blacksmiths' mind and see what they think about the material they use and what they do. Three short narratives may reveal their views. According to the Viśvakarmas throughout Karnataka, iron-ore is a manifestation of Mahākālī. Iron, as a raw material, or in the shape (*rupa*) of a particular product, is considered to be the goddess Kālī. In southern Karnataka, this view is also observed in an episode of the life-history of one of their holy men⁷:

«Siddappaji, following the instructions of his *guru*, went to Halgur to beg the blacksmiths for a piece of iron. However, those blacksmiths who were very rich by virtue of their superiority in the craft, refused to give iron to Siddappaji. 'We can give you gold but not iron. Iron is *amma*, i.e. Kālī, and we cannot give away our mother'».

The intriguing point here is that, in the participants' view, iron has a sacred value which remains unchanged despite the manufacturing process.

Elsewhere in Karnataka, the blacksmiths maintain and serve at a Kālī temple, whose most remarkable feature is Kālī herself, who is represented by an iron ball (*mudde*) to which four hands (*abhaya*) have been welded. About this Kālī the local blacksmiths say⁸:

7. This is a passage taken from Siddappaji's life-history, as it was told to me by one of the smiths in Kollegal, in southern Karnataka.

8. In K. Gollerahalli near Sandur in central Karnataka, the blacksmiths and iron-smelters are the numerically dominant caste. As such, they maintain this temple, where they have also got the priestly rights.

«In the days of yore the Viśvakarmas of this place used to smelt iron-ore which they got themselves from Rananabillebetta (hill) to the north-east of this place. One day they were horrified by a terrible sound that come from one of the furnaces. It shouted: 'I am Kālikambadevi. I have risen here (*udbhava*), do not fear!' Kalibamba rose through the crucible (*muse*) and was just a round ball (*mudde*) of iron, which demanded flesh and blood. From then onwards we offer her an animal, worship her and built the temple. To her right side stands Kamatesvara, her husband. He is also a big round iron ball, which was used as anvil in those days».

This story is also to explain why the blacksmiths are non-vegetarian.

The above two narratives inform us about the blacksmith's principal raw material — iron, but they do not tell us about the blacksmiths themselves. The following short narrative⁹, mostly told in the rural areas, however, does so:

«The primordial placed the red-hot iron on his right knee which was his anvil (*adigallu*) and used his left hand as the tongs (*ikkala*). He hammered the iron with his right hand itself, which was his hammer (*suttige*). It was in this way that he created the first tools».

The narrative tells us that the blacksmith does not get burnt, which suggests that he, unlike the other Viśvakarmas, has a magical power. If the narrative is compared with the imagery of the tools a more complete picture of the blacksmith can be drawn. The *right* knee of the blacksmith is his anvil and the anvil is considered to be a manifestation of Śiva. The *left* hand is the tongs or a manifestation of *adisakti*. The term *adisakti*, which literally means 'the original power', is also used for the mother goddess in general, or the goddess Kālī in particular. The informants stated: «We worship Kālī because she is *adisakti*». It follows that the participants have an androgynous view of the blacksmith: his right side is Śiva and his left side is *adisakti* (Kālī). Furthermore, the narrative mentions the red-hot iron which suggests that both iron and fire are phenomena existing outside the blacksmith. He controls fire in two ways: he does not get burnt and the fire is in the open, *i.e.* not in a furnace.

9. This narrative was told to me by smiths in various districts of southern Karnataka.

In the imagery of the tools, the blacksmith himself is not identified with either *adisakti* or Śiva. But the imagery and actions together add another dimension to the androgynous nature of the blacksmith. The iron is first heated in the furnace during which process the blacksmith employs the poker (*triśula*) in his left hand. When the iron has reached the required temperature he takes it out of the fire with the tongs (*adiśakti* (also in his left hand) and puts it on the anvil (Śiva). While he holds the hot iron with the tongs in his left hand, he forges it with the hammer (*damaru*) in his right hand. Thus, we get two pictures. First, the blacksmith with the *triśula* in his left and the *damaru* in his right hand, and second, with the *adiśakti* in his left hand and the *damaru* in his right hand; while in both cases he is seated between the furnace (Kālī) and the anvil (Śiva). In the first stage, the blacksmith resembles the well-known images of Kālī or Śiva, whose iconography depicts both deities with the same weapons in the same hands as the blacksmith. In the second image, the blacksmith transfers the hot iron with *adiśakti* onto the anvil. This picture corresponds with the action of the primordial smith of the narrative. Thus, the androgynous blacksmith holds the red-hot iron in the *adiśakti* and hammers it with the *damaru* in Śiva. In my view, it is the androgynous nature of the blacksmith, which makes it possible for him to transfer the *śakti* (iron) from Kālī to Śiva.

Considering the mythological and ritual data, the following conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, about the nature of his product: all his products are made of iron, a substance which is a manifestation of Kālī or *śakti*. The blacksmith thus delivers *śakti*. Secondly, about the image of the blacksmith himself: as a deliverer of tools and weapons (*śakti*), he has a relationship with the patron ('king'). This means, that the 'king' depends on '*śakti*'. It is, then, not surprising that the blacksmith does not perform a delivery ritual, for, this ritual, being similar to an *ayudhapūjā*, has to be conducted by the owner of the product, thus by the 'king'.

3. The goldsmith

The goldsmith does not collect his principal raw material from the forest himself. Others do this and the patron gives him

the gold, which has travelled a long way before it reaches him. Having received the gold, he is, in principle, capable of commencing the craft and works on it on his own until the product is finished. Before commencing work, he performs a small *pūjā*: with incense he waves three times round the furnace, which is seen as a manifestation of Kālī, while uttering the Gāyatrī *mantra*. According to the goldsmiths, this *arati* is in honour of the goddess, who protects them.

He seems to prefer to practice his craft entirely alone. The traditional goldsmith, in a remote place, sometimes does the cleaning and polishing himself. In contrast to the blacksmith, the goldsmith delivers his main product — the wedding necklace (*tali*) — with a ceremony.

For its delivery, a winnowing fan (*mora*) is placed on the wooden part of the goldsmith's anvil. Raw rice (*akki*) is spread out on the winnow and a lump of sugar (jaggery), five bananas, wheaten flour (*atachi*) and an open dried coconut (*copra*) are placed on it. The *tali*, the golden finger-rings (*mudu ungara*) and the silver toe-rings (*kalangara*) are put inside the *copra*. Interestingly, the golden chain, with the golden balls (*gundu*), and the black beads (*karimanni*) is delivered separately and unceremoniously. The wedding necklace is only tied to this chain after the marriage ceremony is over. During this ritual, the necklace is tied to a cotton string coloured with turmeric powder.

The goldsmith takes his usual seat between the anvil and the table, while opposite to him the groom's mother sits with four other housewives (*muthaidi*). The goldsmith breaks one coconut with his hammer and utters the Vinayaka *mantra*, while he performs an incense *arati*. Then the *copra* with the *tali* is taken from the winnow and placed in the furnace (Kali) and the housewives perform an *arati* together, with coloured water and an oil-lamp which they have brought for the purpose. Thereafter, the goldsmith does a camphor *arati*. During the last two *aratis*, music is played by two pipers (*nagasvara*) and one percussionist (*mrudangam*). The housewives take the *copra* with the *tali* and the jewels home, while the winnow and its remaining contents is intended for the goldsmith.

To sum up, the small ritual before the commencement of his work, and the delivery ritual, arrest our attention. The first ritual, however small and seemingly insignificant, suggests that the mechanism by which the goldsmith establishes a relationship with the goddess is worship (*pūjā*), in contrast to the blacksmith's sacrifice (*vajña*). It also denotes that this relationship is required at the start of the work. At first sight, the second ritual seems to be a lot of «mumbo-jumbo», but on closer inspection it is highly significant, for it demonstrates *in situ*, and most literally, that the gold-

smith does not have a direct relationship with his patron. The finished product, through the winnowing fan as intermediary, is placed on the furnace, thus handed over to the goddess. The patron's representatives take it away from the furnace: they receive it from the goddess.

Thus, in his craft the goldsmith is fairly independent, but this independence is counterbalanced by a strong dependence on the patron, who is not only the placer of orders, but also the supplier of his principal raw material. Apparently, this is also felt by the goldsmiths themselves, witness the rituals and also the myths about their relationship with the king:

«An aged Viśvakarma goldsmith lived with his five sons in a twelve-pillared house with a courtyard in the middle. One moonlit night, he gathered his sons and asked 'All of you have started goldsmithy independently. I would like to know which part of the gold given to you by the customers for the preparation of ornaments is being retained by each of you?' His eldest son replied first: 'I use all the gold given by the customers. I return the gold completely'. The second son said: 'I keep one quarter of the gold and return the rest'. The third son answered: 'I keep one half of what they give and return the rest'. The fourth son said: 'I keep three-quarters of the gold they give and return only one-quarter in the form of ornaments'. The youngest son says: 'I keep all the gold the customers give and do not return anything'.

The discussion between the father and his son was overheard by the king, who was passing the Viśvakarma house on his stroll in the moonlit night. He was puzzled by the words of the youngest son and the following morning he sent his soldiers to bring this young goldsmith to his court.

In court the king asked the youngest son to prepare a golden idol of Ganapati in the palace. The goldsmith had to accept the king's order and so began to prepare the golden idol in the palace.

However, he also prepared an identical Ganapati idol out of bronze at home at night. In the palace he was provided with gold after it had been weighed and accounted for.

Before commencing his work in the morning, he took a bath and smeared his forehead with sandalwoodpaste. At night he prepared the bronze idol at home. In both places the idol neared completion at the same time.

The king agreed that the goldsmith should perform all necessary ceremonies to deliver and install the idol. The idol would have to be immersed in the tank before the actual installation.

On Thursday night, the goldsmith took the bronze idol to the tank and immersed it. Friday morning, in procession, the golden idol was brought to the same place and the goldsmith also immersed it. A little later, he took then out the bronze idol with a golden gloss, which was brought in procession to the palace where he installed it. The goldsmith was rewarded according to the local customs.

The following day, the king invited all goldsmiths to the palace. He showed them the Ganapati idol and asked them out of which material it was made. All said it was made of gold.

The next day, the king called the young goldsmith, because he found that he had not kept his word to his father. The king told him how he had overheard his discussion with his father and how he had put him to the test.

The goldsmith laughed loudly at the king and said: 'I have certainly kept my word'. The king was astonished and demanded an explanation. Then the goldsmith told the truth about the exchange of the bronze and golden idols. He brought the golden idol from his house and placed it beside the bronze idol. It was impossible to see the difference. The king was so fascinated by the workmanship that he rewarded the goldsmith enormously though the latter had stolen the gold.

This story tells you about the wisdom and knowledge of the goldsmith and the greatness of the craft. Although the king had kept a strong watch over the goldsmith, the latter was able to steal all the gold».

This story provides insight into the relationship between the goldsmith and the king. It is the king who needs the goldsmith. He takes the initiative and (he sent his soldiers) has the goldsmith brought to his palace by force. The goldsmith, however, dependent on the king for his livelihood, accepts the order and the king's conditions.

The story also reveals that the goldsmith is more dependent on the king than the bronzeworker is. The hero of the story can only obtain gold from the king by stealing it, but he already possesses bronze. The goldsmith, in contrast to other Viśvakarmas, depends on the king for his principal raw material.

At the end of the story, the king rewards the goldsmith, because the latter has kept his word to his father and for his good workmanship, but the emphasis of the narrator is on the wisdom and knowledge of the goldsmith.

The dependence of the king on the goldsmith is clear in his invitation to all goldsmiths to judge the quality of the idol. The unanimous judgement of the goldsmith can be seen as a general expression of the problem they have with patronage. They do not like their dependence of the king, which is expressed in the goldsmith's lack of respect for the king (he laughs loudly).

Finally, the problem remains unsolved: the goldsmith accepts the rewards, which the king gives, in spite of the fact that he has stolen the gold.

The fact that the golden idol is made during the day, after the goldsmith has taken a bath, and the bronze idol is made at night, when he has not taken a bath, may signify a difference in conception about the two crafts and their principal raw materials. By

taking a bath the goldsmith renounces himself, while by not doing so, when he casts the bronze idol, he accepts his involvement in the violent nature of the work.

The significance of the last observation can also be applied in a wider context. The beginning of the story shows a parallel with the origin myth of the whole Viśvakarma caste. There was an old Viśvakarma with five sons, *i.e.* Brahmans with five different occupations. Concomitant to this indirect reference to their status as Brahmans is a reference to their kingly background: the description of the house is typical of one belonging to the Right Hand, or peasant (kingly) castes.

If the origin myth stands as a paradigm for the introduction of this story, it may be concluded that those Viśvakarmas who are tied in with the local networks (first and second sons) do not, cannot and will not steal, while those who are more market-oriented (fourth and younger sons) do steal from the king.

Thus, on the one hand, the story discusses the problem of the dependency of the goldsmith and on the other hand it «projects», all Viśvakarmas as being Brahmans and the goldsmith as the one, who is at odds with his dependence on the king even most strongly.

The story may also be called a «trickster-story», because the 'transformation' of gold into bronze appears to be an alchemic trick. Only the goldsmith has the particular knowledge to do this, hence there is no question of theft. The theme of theft of gold, however, features also in another myth, variations of which I collected among goldsmiths from different Viśvakarma sub-castes. This myth is commonly known as the story of Ramsonar (who stole gold in order to be charitable to the people). In this story the king blamed the goldsmith, Ramsonar, for having stolen the gold he had been given to execute his order. Ramsonar was brought to the King's Court to defend himself. The goldsmith prayed to the goddess, who appeared in a dream and told him that she would help him. The goldsmith had to place all the gold on the scales, so that everybody could see it was the same amount which he had received earlier. Of course, not all the gold was there, as the goldsmith had taken it for his own purposes. But the difference was not observed by the king and the others. Moreover, the kings'

daughter remarked: «There is a hand on the gold which wears extremely beautiful golden bangles, please, order Ramsonar to make this type of bangle». The goldsmith knew it was the hand of the goddess who had saved him. In other words, the source of the gold which the goldsmith had stolen is seen by the Visvakarmas to be the goddess. The narrators tell another myth in which Siva and Parvati have a dispute. They cannot decide who is the most beautiful of all, so they conclude that only Viśvakarma can solve the problem. The goldsmith (Viśvajña) makes a mirror, so that Siva and Parvati can judge for themselves. Parvati was very happy, but Siva becomes angry when he sees himself in the mirror. He, therefore, wants to kill the goldsmith. When he is about to burn him with the fire from his third eye, Parvati protects him with her sari. «Because of her protection of the goldsmith Parvati became black. That is the reason why we worship Kālī!» This second story tells us why the goddesses Parvati and Kālī are identical.

The last two myths have the same structure. Śiva, or the king threatens to kill the goldsmith, while the goddess protects him. What the myth actually tells us, however, is that the goldsmith has withdrawn the gold from the goddess, *i.e.* he has desacralized the gold. But the gold can also be seen as having belonged to the king. He knows that the goldsmith has the knowledge to transform gold into money, thus giving him his own power base. Therefore, the king is also a danger for the goldsmith. These two myths explain the goldsmith's debt to the goddess Kali: she and not the king has to be redeemed for the theft of the gold.

Thus, in his view, the goldsmith has granted a major rôle to the goddess, in order to cope with his problem of dependence. The goddess is there to supply the gold and to deliver the product. Thus, in his view, the goldsmith is independent of the supplier of gold and the patron. A closer look at the mythological and ritual information reveals, however, an interesting structure. In both the ritual and myths, the goddess is placed between the goldsmith and the customer. In other words, the goldsmith can take either a female position in relation to the king (male) or a male position in relation to the goddess (female). This reminds us, however distantly, of androgyny.

4. *The blacksmith and the goldsmith compared*

In empirical reality, both the blacksmith and the goldsmith depend on raw material supply and patronage. On this level, the differences between these two types of smith are clear: (i) the blacksmith collects iron-himself, whereas the goldsmith is supplied gold by his patron; (ii) the blacksmith is paid in kind, while the goldsmith is paid in cash; and (iii) the blacksmith does not ritualize his dependence on his patron, whereas the goldsmith does so. Yet, both smiths belong to a single caste, called Visvakarma: they share the same ideal.

In the blacksmith's view, the king is placed in the sacred domain, so that the blacksmith, in his relation to the king, appears independent as long as he does not deliver his product ritually. If so, he would place himself also in the sacred domain and lose his independent stance. For his independence, as collector of iron, he pays a price: his sacrifice to *śakti*¹⁰. The androgyny of the blacksmith expresses a completeness in himself, in which the male (Siva; anvil) keeps the female (*adiśakti*; tongs) in check through a violent exchange of *śakti*. It is through this completeness and his perception of his reality (he is independent) by which he expresses his caste's claim.

In the goldsmith's view, he stands independent in the world, for it is the goddess from whom he receives the gold and it is she who delivers his product. The relationship between the goldsmith and the goddess is established through worship, while he solves his dependence on the king through a trick.

In sum, the blacksmith has sacralized iron through identification with the goddess and gains his 'independence' through violence. His relationship with the goddess is established through sacrifice, thus superseding his dependence on the supply of raw material. He himself, seen as a manifestation of *śakti*, delivers the

10. In the *ayudhapūjā*, the blacksmith cuts the sacrificial victim on the anvil, smears fresh blood on the furnace and places the victim's head on the anvil (which is a manifestation of Śiva). We have seen how Manu, the original blacksmith, is considered to be a manifestation of Śiva. The slaying of the victim on the anvil, and subsequent placing of its head on it, suggests a self-sacrifice by the Viśvakarma blacksmith.

product, thus superseding his dependence on his patron. In contrast, the goldsmith has desacralized gold by withdrawing it from the goddess. He establishes his 'independence' through both worship and a trick. Both Viśvakarmas have thus a relationship with the goddess, but the blacksmith is closer to her and the sacred than the goldsmith. In terms of the ideal: Manu has his *adīśakti* and Viśvajña his *jñānaśakti*, while at a still higher level Gāyatrī, personification of all *śaktis*, is but the female manifestation of Viśvakarman.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, an attempt has been made to show how the artisans, whose claimed status is not so elusive as the discrepancy between their claimed and conceded status would suggest, view their reality. However, following their train of thought, it becomes obvious that they find themselves in a situation similar to that of the 'certified' Brahmins, who also have to live and thus to depend on the king for their livelihood (*vide*: Heesterman, 1985).

Clearly, the ideal artisan is placed outside the world and the Viśvakarmas in the world are confronted with problems of ranking, which can be traced back to difference in purity. The smith in the world has first to come to terms with the goddess, either through sacrifice (for example, in the case of the blacksmith), or through worship (for example, in the case of the goldsmith). The data show that the Viśvakarmas use both mechanisms for this purpose, *i.e.* the relationship with the goddess replaces the idea of dependence on the patron, which exists in everyday life, but it goes beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate on this two-track interpretation of their ideal.

Finally, it is hoped that this exercise has shown the fruitfulness of combining empirical, ritual, and mythological data. Only the journey into the cognition of the artisans can reveal their views of reality and improve our insight into their understanding of a great civilization.

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